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# Republican Policy Committee

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## One Vote Shy: the Balanced Budget Amendment

*"Public debt is the greatest of dangers to be feared  
by a republican government." Thomas Jefferson*

In 1962, the Federal Government's budget reached \$100 billion. By 1971 it had doubled to \$200 billion. By 1977, it had doubled again. In 1983, the Federal budget topped \$800 billion. The budget for **next year**, fiscal year 1997, will be **more than \$1,600 billion**.

Of course, spending has far exceeded revenues, which explains why next year the Federal Government will spend something like **\$240 billion** — nearly \$1,000 for every man, woman, and child in America — just to pay for **interest** on the Federal **debt**, which is more than **\$5 trillion!**

After years of trying, last year the Congress came within one vote of sending a balanced budget constitutional amendment to the States. The **amendment *did* pass the House of Representatives** on January 26, 1995 when H. J. Res. 1 was approved by vote of 300-to-132, easily exceeding the necessary two-thirds majority.

The Senate added an amendment restricting the power of the courts to enforce the amendment and defeated many weakening amendments, but then, on March 2, 1995 the **Senate *failed* by one vote** to adopt the proposed constitutional amendment.

The amendment had **bipartisan support**, as any constitutional amendment must. Fifty-two Majority Senators and 14 Minority Senators supported it — but **it needed one more**.

*Six Senators who voted **against** the balanced budget amendment in March 1995 had voted **for** it 12 months earlier.* The 1994 and 1995 votes are shown on the back of this paper.

The **American people overwhelmingly support** a balanced budget amendment. In a Gallup poll published in the May 22, 1996 edition of *USA Today*, 83 percent of Americans favored a balanced budget amendment and 14 percent opposed it.

**President Clinton "firmly opposes"** the balanced budget amendment. However, a president has no formal role in amending the Constitution.

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# Two Balanced Budget Votes — And Why We're Still a Vote Short

## Voting "aye" in March, 1994

Bennett  
  
Bingaman  
Bond  
Boren  
Breaux  
Brown  
Bryan  
Burns  
Campbell  
Chafee  
Coats  
Cochran  
Cohen  
Coverdale  
Craig  
D'Amato  
Danforth  
Daschle  
DeConcini

Dole  
Domenici  
Dorgan  
Durenburger  
Exon  
Faircloth  
Feinstein

Ford  
Gorton  
Graham  
Gramm

Grassley  
Gregg

Hatch  
Heflin  
Helms  
Hollings  
Hutchison

Jeffords

Kempthorne  
Kohl

Lott  
Lugar  
Mack  
McCain  
McConnell  
Moseley-Braun  
Murkowski  
Nickles  
Nunn  
Packwood  
Pressler  
Robb  
Roth

Sasser  
Shelby  
Simon  
Simpson  
Smith

Specter

Thurmond  
Wallop  
Warner  
Wofford

## Voting "aye" in March, 1995

Abraham  
Ashcroft  
Bacus  
Bennett  
Biden

Bond

Breaux  
Brown  
Bryan  
Burns  
Campbell  
Chafee  
Coats  
Cochran  
Cohen  
Coverdale  
Craig  
D'Amato

DeWine  
Dole\*  
Domenici

Exon  
Faircloth

Frist

Gorton  
Graham  
Gramm  
Grassley

Gregg  
Harkin  
Hatch  
Heflin  
Helms

Hutchison  
Inhofe  
Jeffords  
Kassebaum  
Kempthorne  
Kohl  
Kyl  
Lott  
Lugar  
Mack  
McCain  
McConnell  
Moseley-Braun  
Murkowski  
Nickles  
Nunn  
Packwood  
Pressler  
Robb  
Roth  
Santorum

Shelby  
Simon  
Simpson  
Smith  
Snowe  
Specter  
Stevens  
Thomas  
Thompson  
Thurmond

Warner

## Vote Switchers

**Bingaman**

**Daschle**

**Dorgan**

**Feinstein**  
**Ford**

**Hollings**